



News From

JUDY BIGGERT

CONGRESSWOMAN ♦ 13TH DISTRICT ♦ ILLINOIS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 12, 2001

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Biggert Introduces Bill To Ease Shortage of Nuclear Scientists and Engineers

Legislation Seeks to Increase Supply of Nuclear Workforce That is at 35-Year Low

Washington, DC – U.S. Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL13) today introduced legislation designed to end a shortage in trained nuclear scientists and engineers in the United States.

Biggert's bill, the Department of Energy University Nuclear Science and Engineering Act, would provide financial support for: the operation and improvement of university research reactors; resources for the professional development of faculty in the field of nuclear science; incentives for students to enter the field, and opportunities for education and training; and general research funds.

"For a state such as Illinois that relies on nuclear power for 50 percent of its energy needs and is home to Argonne National Laboratory, which is one of the premier nuclear energy research facilities in the country, the supply of qualified workers is at a critical stage," said Biggert. "The supply of four-year trained nuclear scientists and engineers is at a 35-year low, a situation that will only be exacerbated over the next five years when 25-30 percent of the industry's nuclear workforce and 76 percent of our national labs' nuclear workforce can retire."

"Nuclear science and engineering is a discipline vital not only to nuclear power generation, but to the nuclear Navy, nonproliferation and nuclear security, and the medical, biological, and industrial applications of radiation," said Biggert. "My bill will ensure that America maintains a competent, well-trained workforce of nuclear engineers and scientists so that we can build on the 50 year investment in the nuclear science field that we developed and mastered."

The Department of Energy University Nuclear Science and Engineering Act authorizes \$240 million in federal spending over five years for research and fellowship programs.

Biggert's bill will be the subject of a hearing Thursday in the Science Committee's Energy Subcommittee, which is chaired by U.S. Representative Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD06), an original cosponsor of the bill.

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A summary of the bill is attached.

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